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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Rumania

SUBJECT Port Security/Economic Conditions

PLACE ACQUIRED
(BY SOURCE)

25X1A

DATE ACQUIRED
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SOURCE Officer of an Egyptian merchant ship.

Source's ship arrived at Constanta 28 Oct 53 with a load of iron ore from Calcutta, India. It discharged its cargo and left Constanta 1 Nov 53.

The Office of Naval Intelligence, END, in Report No. 70-54, furnished the following information to CIA for IAC dissemination in accordance with paragraph 3e of NSCID #7.7

1. My ship left Calcutta, India 3 Sep 53 carrying a cargo of iron ore for the port of Constanta Rumania. Upon entering the Black Sea I saw a few fishing vessels but no naval craft until we arrived off Constanta on 28 Oct 53. Outside the harbor, a pilot and two "policemen" boarded the vessel accompanied by a doctor and an armed guard. My ship was anchored outside the harbor area where eight or 10 men conducted a three-hour search, during which the usual items were sealed. A small quantity of tea and sugar belonging to crew members was confiscated. The searching party members were unarmed Rumanians, and only the officials in charge carried pistols. After the search was completed my ship was moved to a wharf where the iron ore was discharged. Shore leave was granted to the members of the crew between 1700 and 2200 local time, but never more than one-third of the crew was given passes at one time, and each man was thoroughly searched before going ashore. Everyone boarding my ship including the ship's agent, was accompanied by an armed guard. There were four old "railroad cranes" of five-ton capacity at the wharf where my ship was berthed.
2. While in the harbor I saw a sailing vessel which appeared to be a training ship, a dredge approximately 200 feet long, and two tankers which I could not identify. I saw several Soviet and Rumanian naval vessels but I do not recall any details of these ships. I did observe two large and one small Rumanian merchant vessels discharging timber and an unknown cargo in bags, several 50-foot harbor tugs, but no salvage tugs. The customs officials in Constanta wore grey uniforms while the port authorities' uniforms were blue, and the Rumanian naval personnel wore a blue uniform lighter in color than the port authorities' dress. I also noted a number of 12-year old children wearing grey uniforms in the city of Constanta but I saw no large number of military personnel.

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3. The general economic conditions were miserable and the only prosperous people appeared to be military personnel. A drink of "not good" vodka cost the equivalent of 65¢ in US money, but the ship's personnel were only permitted to spend local currency provided by the ship's agent. The civilians were shabbily dressed, and a number of the Rumanian long-shoremen attempted to buy clothes from members of the crew. Some were successful and wore the newly purchased clothes underneath their own in order to avoid detection when leaving the vessel. On one trip ashore I attended a Rumanian motion picture theatre and although I could not understand the dialogue, the sound appeared good while the photography was not good. It was obvious that Communist propaganda was interwoven in the story, but I could not tell whether the film was produced in the USSR or Rumania.
4. The Rumanian civilians showed a tenseness toward the crew of my ship, and obviously shied away from any unnecessary contact. When we arrived in Constanta some of the crew shouted and whistled at girls on the wharf, and the girls appeared to be concerned and frightened that they would be seen. I visited a restaurant where the waiters were reluctant to serve me, and seemed afraid to be seen talking to a foreigner. After asking to be served, the waiter brought the food and did not return until I had finished. I would characterize all the Rumanians as being "afraid".

-end-

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